

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### What the Research Says

Not only does effective teaching require a thorough knowledge of academic content and a mastery of a professional knowledge base of teaching strategies, but it also requires effective counseling and communication skills. Professional development should be an ongoing initiative that assists teachers in assessing the effects of their teaching on student performance. Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) found that successful professional development strategies share several features. Such strategies tend to be:

- ◆ Experiential, engaging teachers in concrete tasks of teaching, assessment, and observation that illuminate the processes of learning and development;
- ◆ Grounded in participants' questions, inquiry, and experimentation as well as profession-wide research;
- ◆ Collaborative, involving a sharing of knowledge among educators;
- ◆ Connected to and derived from teachers' work with their students, as well as to examinations of subject matter and teaching methods;
- ◆ Sustained and intensive, supported by modeling, coaching, and problem solving around specific problems of practice; and
- ◆ Connected to other aspects of school change.

These approaches shift from old models of "teacher training" or "in-servicing" to a model in which teachers confront research and theory directly, are regularly engaged in evaluating their practice, and use their colleagues for mutual assistance.

### What Virginia's Educational Reform Says

The SOA require the principal to involve the staff of the school in identifying the types of professional development needed to improve student achievement and to ensure that the staff members participate in those activities. Additionally the principal is required to provide for needed professional development (8 VAC 20-131-210). The SOA also require, for schools that are accredited with warning, the development of a school improvement plan that includes plans for professional development of staff (8 VAC 20-131-310).

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

Number	Descriptor
<b><i>PD 1</i></b>	<b><i><u>Organizational Development</u></i></b>
PD 1.1	Designing an ongoing, school-based program of professional development that is based on the analyses of data and is aligned with the school's goals for improving student achievement
PD 1.2	Basing professional development programs and activities on research-based principles and practices
PD 1.3	Allocating resources to support the professional development program and ensure implementation of improvement initiatives
PD 1.4	Focusing the core of staff learning on research-based content and instructional practices that have been proven effective in improving student achievement
PD 1.5	Identifying essential learning outcomes from professional development activities that will be used to change practice
PD 1.6	Including theory, demonstration, practice with feedback, and coaching in the school's professional development programs and activities
PD 1.7	Monitoring the degree to which new practices are implemented as prescribed
PD 1.8	Determining the effect of changes in practice on student learning
<b><i>PD 2</i></b>	<b><i><u>Personal Professional Growth &amp; Evaluation</u></i></b>
PD 2.1	Embedding professional growth and development into job performance expectations and the performance evaluation process
PD 2.2	Analyzing data/evidence from a variety of relevant sources to identify goals for individual growth and development
PD 2.3	Aligning plans for individual professional development with local improvement initiatives and with areas identified for individual growth
PD 2.4	Connecting teachers' learning outcomes from professional development activities directly to their work in classrooms
PD 2.5	Connecting teachers to external resources such as conferences, workshops, and support networks that align with the needs of individual teachers, departments/grade levels, or local improvement initiatives
PD 2.6	Providing opportunities for teachers to experiment, practice, and obtain feedback as they integrate newly learned skills into their repertoire of instructional practices
PD 2.7	Regularly monitoring the progress of staff in achieving individual professional development goals